

make a huge volume by minutely detailing the structure of all the parts which compose the ear, with a description of their functions; but leaving these to be learned from the various works on anatomy and physiology, and contenting himself with the more practical part of the subject, he has given a short account of the pathology and treatment of the principal diseases of the organ.

The work is divided into three chapters. In the first the author treats of inflammation of the ear generally, both chronic and acute and its consequences. In the second of inflammation, chronic and acute, of particular parts, as well as of the growth of tumours, and the introduction of foreign bodies into the ear. The third chapter is devoted to the consideration of those diseases of the ear which, not being inflammatory, are referred to a particular state of the nerves of the part.

If the knowledge of the nature and treatment of diseases of the ear has not kept pace with the progress of other departments of our science, the fault is to be ascribed as much to the neglect of medical men to devote themselves to the investigation of these affections, as to the inherent difficulties of the subject. The student and country practitioner, who has not the time or opportunity to study the more elaborate works on the subject, will find, in this unpretending volume, much useful information respecting the character and treatment of the principal diseases of the ear.

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ART. XXIV.—*Clinical Midwifery; comprising the Histories of five hundred and forty-five cases of difficult, preternatural and complicated Labour. With Commentaries.* By ROBERT LEE, M. D., F. R. S., Physician to the British Lying-in Hospital and St. Marylebone Infirmary, Lecturer on Midwifery at St. George's Hospital. First American from the second London Edition. Philadelphia, Lea & Blanchard, 1849: pp. 235, 12mo.

THIS volume consists of a series of eight Reports, comprising, as the author states, the most important practical details of all the cases of difficult parturition which have come under his observation during the last fifteen years, and of which he has preserved histories. They have been collected and arranged for publication, in the hope that they may be found to illustrate, confirm, or correct the rules laid down by systematic operators for the treatment of difficult labours, and supply that course of clinical instruction in midwifery, the want of which has been so often experienced by practitioners at the commencement of their career.

A volume containing the practical experience of so competent an observer as Dr. Lee could not be otherwise than valuable, and we commend this one to the profession as being a storehouse of valuable facts and precedents, to which they may refer with confidence in cases of difficulty.

The first Report contains observations on the present state of operative midwifery; and a succinct account of all the cases (eighty) of difficult parturition, which have fallen under the author's observation, in which the midwifery forceps was employed, or it had been proposed to have recourse to it, with a view of illustrating the various circumstances which render it necessary to employ this instrument, of determining the positive good we derive from it, and the injurious consequences which result when it is rashly and injudiciously applied.

The second Report is devoted to an account of difficult labours from distortion of the pelvis, swelling of the soft parts, convulsions, hydrocephalus in the fetus, and other causes, in which delivery was effected by the operation of craniotomy.

The third Report treats of the induction of premature labour in cases of distortion of the pelvis; cancer of the gravid uterus; uterine and ovarian cysts and tumours; organic and nervous diseases of the heart; dropsy of the amnion; obstinate vomiting; hemorrhage from the bowels; chorea and insanity during pregnancy.

The fourth report contains the histories of one hundred and one cases of preternatural labour.

The fifth report comprises the histories of sixty two cases of placental presentation.

The sixth Report embraces the histories of forty-four cases of uterine hemorrhage in the latter months of pregnancy, during labour and after parturition.

In the seventh Report are given the histories of thirty-five cases of retention of the placenta.

The eighth and last Report comprises the histories of forty-eight cases of puerperal convulsions.

From the above *catalogue raisonné* of the contents of this volume it will be perceived that it embraces most of the cases of difficulty which present themselves to the obstetrical practitioner; and coming as it does with the high authority of Dr. Lee's name, it is unnecessary for us to say anything further in its commendation.

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ART. XXV.—*The Principles and Practice of Medicine, in a Series of Essays.* By JOHN W. HOOD, M. D. “By the union of study and practice, we attain a knowledge of the profession.” 8vo. pp. 263: Philadelphia, Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co., 1848.

ONE original medical work, remarks a late writer, even though replete with faults, is of more value than all the well executed compilations which the press pours forth annually. Admitting the truth of this dictum, there will be little difficulty in arriving at a correct appreciation of the value of the Principles and Practice of Medicine of Dr. Hood. The author is no “retailer of other men's opinions;” finding no light from books to direct him in his investigation into the causes, nature, and treatment of diseases, he discarded them at once, making nature alone his study. And “from the teachings of the animal economy in post-mortem examinations, and the effect of morbid and remedial agents in clinical observations,” he has derived principles that give to the work before us, in which they are embodied, a greater amount of originality than any other that has appeared for a long time can justly claim.

In pathology, the leading position of Dr. Hood is, that the source of a numerous class of diseases is an error loci of the abdominal viscera—their being forced, by various causes, from their natural positions.

Upon this simple proposition he has founded an entire system of pathology, explanatory of the causation of nearly all the diseases to which the human organism is liable, “hidden for ages from the wise and skillful” of our profession, and now brought forward in a form designed to enlighten “the obscurity of our science,” and take the place of the “fine spun theories” which have heretofore “misled the weak and obscured the pathway of the medical student.”

The manner in which Dr. Hood was led to a knowledge of the true pathology of a long list of the most frequent and, heretofore, least manageable diseases the physician is called upon to treat, is at once curious and instructive. We give it in his own words:—

“In the second year of my professional career, I was called to attend a case of bilious colic, and, after exhausting the remedies that are usually applied, the possibility of relief was suggested by reversing the erect position, or suspending, for a few minutes, the patient by the feet. A successful trial in a similar case had been witnessed, and, as the usual remedies in this had failed, I directed the experiment to be made. The patient at the time was covered with a cold clammy sweat, and on the change of position, and immediately after the concussion given by the operators, a quantity of gas escaped—a free alvine discharge was made from the bowels, and in twenty minutes the patient was entirely relieved from the symptoms of colic.”

In this *naïf* statement of our author, we perceive the importance of an admonition given, if we recollect right, by Dr. Rush, never to despise the prescription of even an ignorant nurse. It has perhaps been the fruit of much experience, and though often injudiciously administered by unprofessional hands, it may nevertheless become, when carefully adapted to the proper cases and periods of disease, a valuable addition to our remedial agents. Not only has Dr. Hood found that to “invert the body or elevate the hips” is a useful remedy in ordinary constipation, but from the effects of this “heels over head” mode of curing bilious colic, his